

The Impact of Professional Development in the Area of Technology Enhanced Learning on Higher Education Teaching Practices Across Atlantic Technological University - Research Methodology and Preliminary Findings

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Abstract : The objectives of this research study is to examine the impact of professional development in Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) and the digitization of learning in teaching communities across multiple higher education sites in the ATU (Atlantic Technological University *) (2020-2025), including the proposal of an evidence-based digital teaching model for use in a future pandemic. The research strategy undertaken for this study is a multi-site study using mixed methods. Qualitative & quantitative methods are being used in the study to collect data. A pilot study was carried out initially, feedback was collected and the research instrument was edited to reflect this feedback before being administered. The purpose of the staff questionnaire is to evaluate the impact of professional development in the area of TEL, and to capture the practitioner's views on the perceived impact on their teaching practice in the higher education sector across ATU (West of Ireland - 5 Higher education locations). The phenomenon being explored is ' the impact of professional development in the area of technology-enhanced learning and on teaching practice in a higher education institution. The research methodology chosen for this study is an Action based Research Study. The researcher has chosen this approach as it is a prime strategy for developing educational theory and enhancing educational practice. This study includes quantitative and qualitative methods to elicit data that will quantify the impact that continuous professional development in the area of digital teaching practice and technologies has on the practitioner's teaching practice in higher education. The research instruments/data collection tools for this study include a lecturer survey with a targeted TEL Practice group (Pre and post covid experience) and semi-structured interviews with lecturers. This research is currently being conducted across the ATU multi-site campus and targeting Higher education lecturers that have completed formal CPD in the area of digital teaching. ATU, a West of Ireland university, is the focus of the study. The research questionnaire has been deployed, with 75 respondents to date across the ATU - the primary questionnaire and semi-formal interviews are ongoing currently - the purpose being to evaluate the impact of formal professional development in the area of TEL and its perceived impact on the practitioners teaching practice in the area of digital teaching and learning. This paper will present initial findings, reflections and data from this ongoing research study.

Keywords : TEL, technology, digital, education

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